

Label redesign maximizes shelf appeal to fuel continued growth

Clear pressure-sensitive labels help Jarritos® shine rainbow-bright



Faced with mounting pressure from competitive non-alcoholic beverage brands, Novamex, El Paso, Texas, decided to up the “grab factor” of its Jarritos® tropical fruit-flavored drinks with dramatic packaging improvements.

With annual sales growth of more than 20 percent per year for the past five years, the product speaks to Mexican-Americans’ thirst for the good old days, as Jarritos means “little jugs” in Spanish, referring to the tradition of drinking water and other drinks from clay jugs. Jarritos fruit drinks come in 12 flavors and are sold in more than 50,000 U.S. outlets.

“Despite being one of the fastest-growing soft drink brands in the United States, we felt it was time to modernize the Jarritos brand with a fresh, new label and bottle,” said David Flynn, marketing director with Novamex. “Our goal was to upgrade the brand’s image to a cleaner, more up-to-date and premium look that would pop on the shelf. This puts us on par with other beverages that have already made the switch to pressure-sensitive labels.”

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Preserve brand heritage

The vibrant colors of the 11 Jarritos fruit-flavored drinks are a visual signature linked to their associated taste. So, a key goal of the label redesign was to capitalize on the visual appeal to ensure consumers could immediately identify the Jarritos brand at shelf. Unfortunately, the previous wraparound label distracted from the bottle contents.

“We felt a clear-on-clear label would best help maximize shelf appeal of the bright fruit flavors,” said Dan Muenzer, vice president of marketing, with label converter Spear USA. “The new label is now an integrated piece of the packaging.”

Having a label material that delivers excellent clarity for a true “no label” look was essential for leveraging the brand heritage of the Jarritos fruit drinks, which were originally introduced in 1950. To make this happen, Spear recommended a 2-mil clear Fasson® facestock from Avery Dennison. The biaxially-oriented polypropylene (BOPP) face stock was paired with a 1-mil polyethylene terephthalate (PET) liner and an emulsion acrylic adhesive.

“Compared to the traditional labels used previously, the new Fasson® pressure-sensitive film label provided more creative freedom to enhance product image and raise consumer awareness,” Muenzer said. “And it has performed very effectively on the bottling line. It all comes down to the material characteristics working together with the production requirements for overall cost-effectiveness.”

The eight-color labels are printed UV flexo, with a combination of flexo and rotary screen, and applied with a SACMI® labeling machine with optical orientation that enables labeling of more than 600 bottles per minute.

From a straight label-to-label materials standpoint, the new pressure-sensitive label is more expensive. However, the total applied cost of the label is not merely the cost of the material and its conversion, it encompasses all costs attributed to the labeling process — including the investment in application equipment; operational cost of application lines; application flexibility, speed and downtime; logistics; and inventory control.

“The new label allows the vibrantly colored product to shine through so consumers can see the flavors from literally any angle as they make their way down the grocery aisle or scan the beverage cooler. The crystal-clear label really lets the product do the talking.”

Dan Muenzer, vice president of marketing, Spear USA

While the high level of competition in the market keeps Novamex from sharing its overall efficiencies associated with switching to pressure-sensitive, a study by Alexander Watson & Associates notes there is a 10% to 15% throughput efficiency gain with pressure-sensitive in the beverage industry. For Novamex, the total applied costing makes the new pressure-sensitive Jarritos label more cost-effective.

International expansion

Along with making the switch to pressure sensitive and a more modern theme, the Jarritos packaging redesigns included updating the bottle shape with a more contemporary look for the long-recognized brand. The bottle mold was changed to a straight-wall, lighter weight bottle.

Today, Jarritos has become one of the leading soft drink brands in the United States by targeting Mexican immigrants longing for home-country brands. Sales at privately held Novamex, which now distributes 11 Mexican brands, continue to grow, thanks mostly to Jarritos.

Due to the flexibility of the pressure-sensitive label redesign and its dramatic appearance, Novamex expects to continue to grow Jarritos aggressively as an international Hispanic soda brand. Export expansion plans include Australia, Canada, Spain and other European countries. Novamex expects to continue BOPP roll-form wrap decoration conversion to pressure-sensitive labeling for other brands as well.

“Novamex is committed to product differentiation, which is what separates it from the competition,” Flynn said. “And now we have the packaging to prove it on grocery shelves across the United States and globally.”



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